



Lazarus and a Resurrection Promise

GRACE

We need God's love.

Power Text

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, NIV).

Key Texts and References

John 11:1-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 533-536; student story on page 84 of this guide.

Objectives

The students will:

Know that Lazarus died the first death and will be raised again at Christ's second coming.

Feel assured that they, too, will be raised at Christ's second coming.

Respond by getting excited about the Second Coming.

Power Point



Jesus gives us new life today and for eternity.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

As Jesus comes to Lazarus' tomb, He calls for the stone to be removed. Martha objects, but Jesus reminds her to believe and see the glory of God. The people clearly view Lazarus' wrapped corpse as Jesus prays. His prayer affirms His claim to Sonship with God and demonstrates confidence in the Father's response.

This is a lesson about grace.

The ultimate goal of God's grace is to give us back the forever life that Adam lost when he sinned. Life is God's crowning gift; it comes to us with Jesus when we accept Him. Eternal life begins now. The resurrection of Jesus is our guarantee of resurrection life. The resurrection of Lazarus was a foretaste of our resurrection.

EIGHT

Program Notes			
Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door Hear pleased/troubled	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. Resurrection Exclamations B. Resurrection Towers	Toilet paper rolls, pens, tape, marker board, marker Stackable items
* Prayer and Praise*	15-20	See page 80. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Photocopies of John 11:1- 44, NIV; two scarves (optional), red cloth, "mummy," brown grocery bag
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	Scenario	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	Resurrection Reading	Art supplies OR puppets OR helium balloons, Bibles, table

Teacher Enrichment

"Though He was the Son of God, yet He had taken human nature upon Him, and He was moved by human sorrow. His tender, pitying heart is ever awakened to sympathy by suffering. He weeps with those that weep, and rejoices with those that rejoice" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 533).

"He saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy upon His soul" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 534).

"What human power can do divine power is not summoned to do. God

does not dispense with man's aid. He strengthens him, cooperating with him as he uses the powers and capabilities given him [or her]" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 535).

"[Jesus'] resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead. 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him' (1 Thess. 4:14)" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 786).

How can I celebrate the resurrection in my life today? How has Jesus strengthened me? How does my perspective change when I focus on Jesus' coming back to take me home with Him forever?

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their table/small group leader. Have leader ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Then debrief student(s) on their Bible study activities last week. Say: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** (The leader should know what the students' activities were for the past week so he/she can direct discussion.) Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- toilet paper rolls
- pens
- tape
- marker board
- marker

A. Resurrection Exclamations

Ahead, write the following on the board:

Directions: Take 12-inch (30 centimeters) strips of toilet paper. Imagine yourself in Lazarus' place; Jesus has just raised you, and the bandages over your face have been unwrapped. What do you see, hear, feel? What might you exclaim? Write your exclamation on the TP strip. Write as many exclamations as you can on as many strips as it takes.

In class, say: **I need a volunteer to come up and be wrapped in toilet paper.** Accept a volunteer, perhaps another adult. **Let's see if we can wrap and tape our exclamation strips, completely covering** (name the person) **in two minutes. Let's go!** (The wrapping may take longer, but the time limit will give the students a challenge.)

Debriefing

Stand beside the wrapped mummy and say, **I hope you don't mind standing for a little while, because we are going to save you for the Bible story. How do you feel about missing the next activity?** (Accept their responses.) **How would you like to be out of action for the rest of the day?** (not fun) **How about for the rest of the week?** (Panic probably sets in.) **What would you miss if you were out for the rest of the year?** Let the other students help answer this question. **One of the depressing things about death is all the stuff you might miss. But there is a bright side to this—with God, there always is a bright side! Death is not the end; there's a resurrection coming.** Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16. **Now get this:**



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B. Resurrection Towers

You Need:

- stackable items

You need something to stack to make a tower, such as wood blocks or empty tissue boxes, or books, or rocks.

Ask the students to form groups of four or five people. (Small church: students work alone, or in pairs, or as one group.) Place a stack of building materials in the center of the room. Say: **The object of this activity is to see how tall a tower you can build in two minutes and 25 seconds. Before you can come take a block, someone in your group must name someone they look forward to seeing in the resurrection. Just as fast as you think of someone, come get a block and add it to your tower. Are you ready? Go!** When time is up, or when the first tower topples, call time and ask the groups to count their blocks. Applaud the winners. Ask: **Did any group name Jesus?** (If they did, ask if they named Him first.) Say together John 11:25, 26. **Think of Jesus at Lazarus' tomb. He, the Resurrection and the Life, is standing there waiting to raise Lazarus. And everyone is crying. Let us not make the same mistake, OK?** If time allows build another tower, this time naming things that will make our lives better in the resurrection.

Debriefing

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Ask: **Who are the dead in Christ?** (Those who have put their trust in Jesus.) **So if we have given our lives to Jesus we can know for sure that**



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Notes



Prayer and Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Spirit Song" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 72)

"For God So Loved the World" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 43)

"Special Delivery" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 51)

"Come Away" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 74)

"He's Alive Again" (*Praise Time*, No. 31)

Prayer

Explain that you are going to pray with your eyes open today. Say: **God, we love You so much and we just want to tell You what You mean to us.** Pause a moment. If the students don't start telling how they feel about God, invite them to say just a sentence or two each. Then continue: **God, we have let You down, and we are sorry.** Invite the students to tell God what they are sorry about. **God, we have some special joys and we bring them to You now.** The students may tell these to you; that's OK. Remind them that they are praying with their eyes open. Finally ask them to tell their needs and concerns in a similar way. Close by saying: **Lord, You know what is on our hearts. Thank You for taking these burdens for us. Be at the center of our thoughts today and always. Amen.**

Mission

God has given us an important mission: to tell the world about the resurrection life that is in Jesus. Today's report of our front-line mission comes from _____. Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* or another mission report available to you.

Offering

As you bring up your offering, tell God in your heart that this is one way you want to help tell the world about Jesus.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **This is the last week we are going to study John 11. What stands out most vividly in your minds about what we have been studying in John 11?** (Allow time for responses.) **What has been most meaningful to you personally these past three weeks?** (Encourage responses.) **Let's have a dramatic review of this important chapter.**

Experiencing the Story**You Need:**

- photocopies of John 11:1-44, NIV
- two scarves (optional)
- red cloth
- "mummy"
- brown grocery bag

Ahead, photocopy John 11:1-44 from the NIV so that the direct conversation will appear with quotation marks. In your copy, underline or highlight the parts spoken by each character. You will cue the students when it is their turn.

The scarves are for head coverings for Mary and Martha; the strip of

red cloth is to be fastened over the shoulder and around Jesus; the mummy is already wrapped in toilet paper from Readiness A; the brown grocery bag is to be opened out and a large circle cut out to represent the huge rock to be rolled from the entrance to the tomb.

Ask for volunteers to be (a) Mary, (b) Martha, (c) Jesus, (d) a stagehand (holds the brown "rock"), (e) the disciples (half the class), (f) the mourners (the other half of the class), and (g) Thomas. Lazarus is already up front.

Bring the volunteers to the front of the room. Lazarus is already up front, wrapped in TP; the stagehand holds the "rock" in front of Lazarus. Instruct all the characters to listen and act according to

the story as it unfolds. Begin reading at verse 1. Do not read any portion that is between quotation marks, but pause for the appropriate character to read it. At the end of verse 44, have several volunteers strip the TP piece by piece from Lazarus and read loudly what is written there.

Say: **The story is not quite finished. Ellen White tells us that everyone gathered around the tomb is "at first speechless with amazement." Then rejoicing and thanksgiving break out. "The sisters receive their brother back to life as the gift of God." Tearfully they thank Jesus. And while everyone is rejoicing, "Jesus withdraws from the scene. When they look for the Life-giver, He is not to be found"** (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 536).

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel about this story?** (Wait for responses.) **What for you was the saddest part?** (Accept their responses.) **What do you think was the saddest part for Jesus?** (That they were crying when He was there; that they forgot about Him when they were rejoicing; that some of them still didn't believe.) **What is there in this story for us to rejoice over?**
That



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Exploring the Bible

Say: **There is good news for us in the story of Lazarus's resurrection. Let's try to find answers to the following questions:**

You Need:

- Bibles

1. What can you do so that Jesus will raise you as He did Lazarus? Ask someone to find and read John 5:24. (Eternal life is for “whoever hears . . . and believes” [NIV].) **You can’t do anything to make Him love you more; you can’t do anything to make Him love you less. Just believe and take Him at His word.**

2. How do God’s people know they will be resurrected? Have someone reread John 5:24 (because when we accept Jesus we have eternal life now; “has crossed over from death to life” [NIV]).

3. When is the resurrection? Have someone find and read 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. (at the Second Coming)

4. But how long will we have to wait for the Second Coming? Have someone find and read Revelation 22:7. (“Behold I am coming soon!”)

5. What if people sin again and death returns? Have someone find and read Revelation 21:4. (Death, mourning, crying, and pain will be no more.)

Debriefing

Where is grace at the Second Coming? (Jesus comes in clouds to raise the dead and gather the faithful who are alive, not because we earned it or deserve it, but because the whole point of giving us Jesus is so we can live forever, without pain or death.) **Jesus comes for those who already believe in Him and have asked Him into their lives—for those who have the seed of forever life in them already. Remember,**



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3

Applying the Lesson

Scenario

Say: **Your friend Daniel is not sure that he wants Jesus to come soon. When you ask him why, he just shrugs. Why do you think Daniel is not excited about a soon-coming Saviour?** (He may not be ready; he may think it will be no fun; he may be afraid to go without his family; etc.) **What could you say to help Daniel realize that this is something he doesn’t want to miss?** (Help Daniel know Jesus as his friend; tell Daniel about heaven; show him Revelation 21, 22; tell him about resurrection life.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel about**

Jesus coming soon? (Do not press them to respond; instead share your joy in the blessed hope.) **What excites you about living forever? What difference will it make in your life to have Jesus as your personal friend and Savior? If you would like to receive Jesus, please stay after class and talk to me. And if you have received Him, let’s start making plans for heaven, knowing that we will be there.**



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So let’s be glad!

4

Sharing the Lesson

Resurrection Reading**You Need:**

- art supplies
OR puppets
OR helium balloons
- Bibles
- table

Ask students to find the description of the resurrection in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Tell them that you would like them to create a dramatized reading of this passage to share with the adults or a chil-

dren's Sabbath School division. The goal is to help the future audience enter into the experience described in these verses.

(Depending on what you have available, you could provide helium balloons, or sock puppets, a "turned-over-table" stage, suggest the students work with lighting and/or sound effects, etc.)

Have students work together or in a group, depending on the size of your Sabbath School. Be sure that no group of students is left without the assistance of a creative student or adult.

Allow time for planning, implementing, and practice of whatever presenta-

tions are created. Make concrete arrangements for a presentation to a real audience.

Debriefing

Say: **What if you could really see Jesus in the air, as you can see the _____; how would you feel?** (glad, don't know) **How would you like to be sailing up through the air, knowing that you are perfectly safe?** (positive) **What if your best friend is just ahead of you, saying "Come on, let's see if we can touch the cloud of angels"?** (Some will be enthusiastic.) **You cannot imagine the fun things you can explore on the way. And it can all be yours; just ask Jesus. It comes with resurrection life. And what do we know about that?**



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Closing

Say 1 Thessalonians 4:16 together. Pray that God will help your students imagine what heaven is like and fill them with a desire to be there. Assure students again that



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STUDENT LESSON

Lazarus and a Resurrection Promise

Key Texts

John 11:1-44;
1 Thessalonians
4:13-18

Power Text

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, NIV).

Power Point

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Did you hear about the man in New York City who offers to sell the Brooklyn Bridge to a rich tourist? When the tourist can't decide if he wants to buy, the man adds the Titanic to the deal! Of course, it's a hoax. Doubters say the resurrection is a hoax too. But that's not what the resurrection of Lazarus shows.

Mary kneels at Jesus' feet sobbing. Mourners who have followed her are also weeping. A great sadness settles upon the Master; He begins to weep. He weeps for the sisters who cannot understand what He is about to do. He weeps for all people everywhere, past, present, and future, who grieve. He weeps for the doubting Pharisees who pretend to mourn, but who will soon plot to kill both Jesus and the newly resurrected Lazarus. He sees clearly that their rejection of Him ensures their forever death after the judgment. So Jesus weeps.

"See how He loved him!" some of the Jewish leaders murmur, thinking that Jesus is just missing His friend.

Then Jesus gets up and moves toward the tomb. He stands outside the cave where Lazarus' body has been lying four days. Earlier this day Jesus has claimed to be "the Resurrection and the Life." And in the same breath, He has said that someone who believes in Him will live, even though they die. He has prepared the people for a miracle.

Scanning the crowd who have now all gathered expectantly, we see the sad sisters, Mary and Martha, beside Jesus. Around them stand Jesus' disciples. Sad relatives and proud Pharisees surround them. Confidently, Jesus waits to resurrect His friend, but the weeping and wailing have taken center stage.

A hush falls over the mourners as the crowd looks toward Jesus.

"Roll away the stone," He says.

Martha's mouth drops open; her eyes widen in horror. "No!" she gasps. "It's been four days. Think of the odor!" The thought of putting the decomposing body on view humiliates Martha. For a moment her pride stands in the way of Jesus and the blessing she most desires.

"Didn't I tell you to believe and see the glory of God?" Jesus gently reminds her.

So they take away the stone. And Jesus lifts His face toward God. "Father," He says, "thank You for hearing Me. You always hear, but I wanted these to believe."

The Pharisees, some of whom were standing there at the tomb, have accused Jesus of using Satan's power to heal. Besides, they do not believe Jesus is God's Son. This resurrection will prove that His claims are no hoax.

Everyone can clearly see the cold, silent form lying there. Nobody questions whether or not Lazarus is dead. Nobody moves a muscle. Then Jesus stands tall, His face glowing with light from heaven.

"Lazarus, come out!" He calls loudly. The crowd waits breathlessly, not wanting to miss anything. A shudder of life stirs the body in the cave. Suddenly Lazarus stands at the door of the cave, wrapped tightly from head to toe.

"Loose him," Jesus says, giving the onlookers a chance to help. As the bandages come away, Lazarus, strong and

healthy, gazes into the eyes of His Lord and friend and grins. Suddenly the crowd erupts in celebration. The sisters call their thanks to Jesus and turn to receive the congratulations of their friends. Jesus slips quietly away. When they look for the Life-giver, He is gone.

Is resurrection a hoax? Just as surely as Lazarus was raised, and because Jesus died and was raised, in Jesus we have resurrection life, and we have it now.

Sabbath

- Do this week's activity on page 53.

Sunday

- Read "Lazarus and a Resurrection Promise."
- Read the power text and think about its meaning.
- What difference can it make in your life to know Jesus and believe His is coming to take you home with Him forever?
- Write your answers in your Bible study journal.
- Ask God to help you know for sure that He can resurrect you.

Monday

- Read John 11:38-44.
- What did Martha do that could have prevented Jesus from raising Lazarus (verse 39)? What was Martha failing to remember (verse 25)?
- Begin to learn the power text.
- Thank God for His resurrection power.

Tuesday

- Read John 5:24-27.
- Which verse proves to you that you have forever life now?
- Ask an older Christian if they think verse 24 means that they will never die.
- Look at a dry bean seed. What signs of life are there? Soak the bean in water overnight.
- Ask God to take your dry heart and water it with faith and love.

Wednesday

- Read John 5:28, 29.
- What two groups of people does Paul say will be resurrected? Which group has resurrection life? What makes the difference for those who have it?
- Check the bean you left soaking. Gently remove the skin and separate the two halves. What sign of future life do you see?
- Ask God to give you the assurance that He has planted in you the seed of forever life.

Thursday

- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.
- According to these texts:
When does resurrection life take effect?
When do the saints who have died go to heaven?
Why does it not make sense to pray to saints?
- Pray that God will keep you until He comes.

Friday

- Plan a special sunset worship.
- Share the power text with your family.
- Make sock puppets to wear on your hands. Lie on your backs while a family member reads 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Raise and lower the puppets to illustrate the words of the text.
- Sing "Jesus Is Coming Again" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 213). Make a new verse about graves being opened.
- Pray that your family will all go up to heaven together with Jesus.